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SUBJECT: SPAIN: SECRETARY,S LETTER ON HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

REF: STATE 57035

Poloff delivered an advance copy of the the Secretary,s letter on the Human Rights Council, as well as accompanying talking points, to Spanish MFA Human Rights Director Fernado Fernandez Arias on April 11. Arias undertook to convey the letter immediately to the Foreign Minister (a copy under cover of a note from the Ambassador, with accompanying Spanish translation, to follow.) As a preliminary response, Arias said that, like the US, Spain did not intend to put forth its candidacy now for the Human Rights Council, but would launch a campaign for membership in the 2008 Council elections, noting the importance of Spanish membership on the Council during Spain,s EU Presidency in the first have of 2010. (As an EU member, Spain has already pledged against voting for states subject to UN Security Council sanctions for human rights abuses, and against those states with a record of systematic human rights violations.)
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